

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 1 on page 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

As explained in greater detail subsequently, embodiments of the present invention utilize a failover filter driver to coordinate I/O requests between the various data paths comprising each multi-path data path 208. More particularly, the failover filter driver intercepts I/O requests from an operating system (OS) executing on the computer system 202. Each I/O request is then routed to the particular storage device 204a, 204b, or 204c desired by the OS. When the I/O request is destined for a storage device coupled to the computer system via a multi-path ~~mult-path~~ data path, such as data path 208, the failover filter driver determines the best data path of the plurality of data paths comprising the multi-path data path 208 to use to access the storage device.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 3 on page 12, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The class driver 214 can be any class driver designed to operate with the storage devices being used in conjunction with the computer storage system 200b. As shown in Figure 2B, each class driver 214 is designed to operate in conjunction with a particular storage device, such as a CD 216a, a disk drive 216b, or a tape drive 216c. The device driver 220 provides the OS access to the storage devices of the computer system. Each driver is a program that interacts with a particular storage device or special type of software, and includes specialized knowledge of the device or special software interface that programs using the driver do not have. During operation, each device driver creates a device object for the device associated with the device driver.

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The device object defines the related device and the data path used to access the device. Hence, in use each storage device 204a, 204b, and 204c will have an associated device object, which is used by the operating system to access the associated device. More specifically, storage device 204b will have two related device objects, one for each data path 208a and 208b providing access to the storage device 204b.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 20 on page 14, with the following rewritten paragraph:

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A decision is then made as to whether the I/O request should be blocked, in operation 306. Each received I/O request is associated with a particular device object, which is used by the system to perform the I/O request. The failover filter driver examines this device object to determine whether it is masked, as described in greater detail subsequently. The failover filter driver blocks I/O requests to masked device objects. If the I/O request is to be blocked, the method 300 continues with a reject I/O operation 308, otherwise the method continues with operation 310.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 16 on page 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

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When the I/O request is not blocked, a decision is made as to whether the I/O request is set to manual-path-selecting or automatic-path-selecting, in operation 310. Embodiments of the present invention are capable of performing both a manual-select device access, which allows an application to determine the data path to access the device, or an automatic-select access, wherein the failover filter driver determines the best data path to use in accessing the device. If the I/O request is a manual I/O request, the method 300 continues with a path selection operation 312. If the I/O

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request is an automatic I/O request, the method 300 continues with a detection operation 314.